

4. District and Charter Preparation for Az SAFE Implementation

This section contains the recommended actions for districts/charters to take in preparation for Az SAFE implementation in the 2009–2010 school year. Formation of a special district implementation team for this process is suggested. A detailed action plan utilized by the Phoenix Union High School District is also available as an example; see the [Sample Implementation Plan](#). Although Phoenix Union is a large district, their action plan can be a helpful guide for smaller entities. The recommended actions are listed below and expanded upon afterwards.

Recommended Actions:

- Identify and assign members to the implementation team; create subcommittees as needed.
- Compare terms and definitions.
- Conduct district policy review to determine need to modify or adopt policies and procedures that support the requirements.
- Create or revise current office discipline referral form to be compatible with requirements.
- Determine which data management system you will use - Az SAFE Online or an updated version of your current Student Management System (SMS).
- If using an updated version of your SMS, contact your vendor regarding the date their system revisions will be completed.
- Identify the training needs of various staff.
- Create appropriate training modules and a plan to inform and teach the new system to all stakeholders.
- Consider creating procedural manuals either hard copy and/or electronic, for continued reference of the new procedures.

Implementation Team

The special implementation team will address district and site level actions that must be taken to plan and oversee the conversion to the new way of collecting and reporting school discipline and safety issues. Recommended team membership includes the following (for small districts, consider roles rather than positions when selecting members):

- Campus administrator responsible for discipline
- District safety coordinator
- District IT specialist
- District special education director
- District policy specialist
- Safe and Drug Free Schools Program/prevention coordinator
- Social worker/counselor

Compare Terms and Definitions

Compare the current terms and definitions for incidents, people and actions to the Az SAFE required and recommended terms and definitions. Terms or definitions not currently in use in your discipline handbook or those not authorized for collection in your district policies need to be identified. The implementation team needs to present these terms to district leadership for consideration of adoption by the district board of education. More information on the terms and definitions can be found in Section 2 of this manual.

Policy Review

Conduct a policy review to determine if your policies support the collection of the new required and recommended items concurrently with your review of current terms and definitions. A suggestion is to identify and collect in one notebook all the policies, exhibits and regulations that relate to school safety and discipline.

Create or Revise the Office Discipline Referral (ODR) Form

Sample referral forms have been developed for incidents involving one offender and for incidents involving multiple offenders. Refer to the [Prototype Forms for Incident Referral](#). Your current discipline referral form should include the necessary data collection and reporting information, including violations, people involved, location, date, time of day, actions taken and dates of action, injuries, and referring staff person. The referral form should align with the data system to facilitate accurate entry into the system. Consider capturing whether the incident is bias/hate related, gang related, and the cost of damages, as done on the sample forms. Also consider implementation of an electronic version of the referral form.

The Az SAFE Online system creates an individual student incident report that is appropriate for the student file or for parent/guardian notification. This report does not include identifiable information on other individuals that might be involved in an incident and therefore is consistent with FERPA requirements. For districts utilizing an SMS, development of a report of this type is recommended.

Determine Which System to Use

Compare use of the Az SAFE Online system with use of your district's current SMS to determine which option best meets your needs.

Contact Your Vendor

If you choose to stay with your current SMS, contact the vendor representative to confirm when the system will be compliant with Az SAFE capture and submission requirements. The SMS/SIS Vendor List contains contact information and tentative dates for completion. The updated discipline screens need to be viewed prior to creating training materials and manuals.

Identify Training Needs of Staff

Staff training should include system changes created by the new requirements and changes that directly effect staff members' daily work. Create required training modules for each category of staff based on how the new system will impact their work.

Inform all campus administrators of the changes that are occurring. In addition, and specifically, update principals regularly about the changes and their role in supporting the new process. The administrators who oversee discipline need very specific training regarding the changes and their connection to the safety team and new data collection and reporting requirements. Update all other administrators, as needed, in the process and their responsibilities in supporting the changes.

Provide the staff that directly input the data with detailed instruction to meet the new data entry requirements. Practice entering data in the new fields. If the team decides to use the current SMS, they need to determine specifically who, when and how the electronic files will be sent to ADE. Data submission is automatic for schools utilizing Az SAFE Online.

Teachers need training in completing the new discipline referral form accurately so that all information is complete. The school personnel need to be able to report a behavior as they see it without bias or opinion using objective, factual, behavior-specific language to describe the incident.

Conduct a needs assessment to determine additional staff training and content. Include classified staff, bus drivers, cafeteria personnel, janitorial and maintenance staff – everyone who can report a violation.

Create Training Modules

Develop a training plan that includes short awareness modules for the current school year and then detailed training modules before the beginning of the 2009-2010 school year to keep the process on track. Consistency and effective timing of the message sent to all stakeholders is critical. Consider calling upon staff members with effective training skills to assist in the creation and presentation of the implementation training.

Consider Creating Procedural Manuals

Creating hard copy and/or electronic versions of the procedural manual for each staff member group that is directly impacted will help to maintain consistency.

Utilize the [Blank Implementation Plan](#) to develop your own implementation plan.